

[By Bob Kinzel](#)

(Host) Congressman Peter Welch says partisan fighting over raising the national debt ceiling could cause serious economic problems.

Welch says both Democrats and Republicans need to compromise as they develop a financial package to reduce the national debt.

VPR's Bob Kinzel reports.

Congressman Peter Welch says this development would most likely short-circuit a fragile economic recovery and cause serious financial problems.

Welch says the time has come for Republican and Democratic leaders to put together a package that includes tax increases for wealthy people and budget cuts for virtually every federal program:

(Welch) "That's going to help us to where we need to be and everybody else kicks in; corporations kick in, the Pentagon kicks in, we make adjustments in every program. Then you get that spirit of shared sacrifice, shared contribution that I think is always essential when you have to do big things."

(Kinzel) Welch has developed a reputation in Congress as a person who seeks bipartisan solutions to a number of key issues. He says his message to his Republican colleagues on the bill to raise the debt ceiling is quite clear.

(Welch) "We've all got to be in this together and that means if you're going to be asking us to take a hard look at some of the programs Democrats have traditionally supported, you've got

to put some revenues. Particularly when we look at the taxing situation and the well-off in this country really have never had it so good."

(Kinzel) And Welch says his Democratic colleagues also need to be ready to make some concessions to a number of key programs.

(Welch) "If we are for Medicaid and Medicare, for instance, and we want to make certain Social Security is solvent and secure, we have to be the ones that look at this the hardest and see where we can make it more efficient, where we can make it more sustainable."

(Kinzel) Welch says Congressional leaders shouldn't wait until the last minute to negotiate a compromise debt ceiling bill.

He says a delay in reaching an agreement could cause the country's financial markets to suffer substantial losses because the markets will be concerned that Congress won't be able to pass a compromise by the August 2nd deadline.